

Message Text

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FOR SIMONS FROMANDREWS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE IS PLANNING A TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION DURING THE EASTER RECESS, WITH STOPS ON THE WAY TO MOSCOW IN COPENHAGEN AND HELSINKI. THE PERIOD THEY HAVE SET ASIDE FOR THE TRIP IS MARCH 23-APRIL 3. THEY PLAN TO BE IN MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD FOR CLOSE TO FIVE DAYS, WHERE CODEL INTENDS TO DISCUSS SALT AND OTHER ARMS LIMITATION MATTERS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS. MEETINGS WITH GROMYKO, CHIEF OF STAFF OF SOVIET ARMED FORCES, AND OTHERS WILL BE REQUESTED.

2. CODEL WILL BE LED BY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MELVIN PRICE (ILLINOIS) AND CONSIST OF 50-55 PERSONS, INCLUDING SOME SEVEN COMMITTEE MEMBERS; WIVES, POSSIBLY SIX CONGRESSMEN
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FROM OTHER COMMITTEES, 2 OR 3 COMMITTEE STAFF MEMBERS, INCLUDING STAFF DIRECTOR JOHN FORD, DOD ESCORT PERSONNEL, AND A STATE ESCORT (PROBABLY FROM SOV). THE NAMES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOW SIGNED ON INDICATE CODEL WILL REPRESENT A FAIRLY BROAD SPECTRUM OF VIEWS, INCLUDING SAMUEL STRATTON (D, N.Y.) MAJORIE HOLT (R, MD.), ROBERT WILSON (R, CALIF.) AND LARRY MACDONALD (D, GEORGIA). SOV TELLS US BOTH THE

DEPARTMENT AND THE SOVIETS ARE IN FAVOR TO THE VISIT,

AND THAT RECENT PANOMAREV PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION SUGGESTED SUCH A VISIT. IN ADDITIONAL TO ARMS LIMITATION DISCUSSIONS, WE EXPECT THERE WILL BE SOME MEETINGS WITH SOVIET PARLIAMENTARIANS, AND CODEL HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN VISITING SOVIET SHIPBUILDING FACILITIES (WHICH SOVIETS MAY WELL NOT AGREE TO).

3. WE HAVE JUST LEARNED (YOU GUESSED IT) THAT THE COMMITTEE HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN MAKING A STOP IN AN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY ON THE WAY BACK FROM THE SOVIET UNION. THE DATES WOULD BE MARCH 30-APRIL 1ST. AT THIS POINT THERE IS ONLY A LIMITED POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A STOP. HOWEVER, SINCE COMMITTEE HAS REQUESTED OUR VIEWS ON UTILITY OF SUCH A STOP WE REQUEST YOUR COMMENTS, IN THIS CHANNEL, BY OPENING OF BUSINESS WASHINGTON TIME ON MARCH 9.

4. WE WILL REALIZE THAT SUCH A LARGE CODEL WOULD BE A HARDSHIP ON THE EMBASSY, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND BELIEVE THAT THERE COULD WELL BE ADVANTAGES TO SUCH A VISIT. WE WOULD GUESS, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE ROMANIANS WOULD HAVE QUITE A BIT TO SAY ABOUT THEIR VIEWS ON DISARMAMENT, WHICH WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE CODEL TO HEAR FIRST-HAND. ALSO, WE SUSPECT GOR WOULD GIVE CODEL A GOOD RECEPTION AND THAT CEAUSESCU HIMSELF MIGHT RECEIVE THEM. ALL OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THIS WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO PRE-CEAUSESCU VISIT ATMOSPHERE. WHAT ABOUT FEASIBILITY OF OTHER SENIOR-LEVEL APPOINTMENTS COMPARABLE TO THOSE SOUGHT IN MOSCOW? VANCE

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